



South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



SDNG TO RECEIVE NEW CYBER PROTECTION TEAM

The National Guard Bureau has announced that the South Dakota Army National Guard has been selected to receive one of seven new Army National Guard cyber protection teams to be fielded by the end of fiscal year 2019.

As part of ongoing growth of cyber forces throughout the Department of Defense, the Bureau announced plans to activate additional cyber units spread throughout 23 states.

South Dakota will share a 39-member team with North Dakota, Colorado and Utah designed to help protect the nation's critical cyber infrastructure and address emerging cyber threats.

Seven members of the team will be assigned to South Dakota and is expected to be organized during fiscal year 2018. No decision has been made on where the unit will be based and will be announced at a later date.



"The National Guard provides a critical defensive cyber capability available to governors of all 54 states and territories in support of DoD, federal and state response as part of a layered defense," said Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, adjutant general of the SDNG. "Cyberspace is critical to both joint military operations and the National Guard's support of national security objectives. To do this, the National Guard continues to develop integrated cyber capabilities and build the skilled cyber workforce that is critical to our operations."

Inside this issue:

Holiday Message from SDDVA Benefits Team	2-3
Holiday Message from SDDM	4
SDNG Clothing/Toy Drive	5
MJF Veterans Home Update	6
Veterans Courts	7
Upcoming Events	7

HOLIDAY MESSAGE FROM SDDVA SECRETARY ZIMMERMAN

One of my favorite holiday songs is Anne Murray's "Christmas Wishes." In the second verse she notes that if she could have three wishes – the first would be peace on earth, good will among men, and love in all that we do. And her second wish is that her first wish goes on forever.

Her wish, and that of mine, is easy to dream, but as Eleanor Roosevelt once said, "It isn't enough to talk about peace, one must believe in it. And it isn't enough to believe in it, one must work at it."

Peace on earth is a gift that generation after generation loves to give their children and grandchildren. Together, let's continue to work at it. With our world issues of late there is not a better time to sit by the fireplace or the decorated tree and thank God for all we have.

When Murray sings, "and love in all that we do," I can't help but think about our benefits staff at the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. Their compassion, commitment and their unending dedication in all that they do to assist our veterans and their families.

"And love in all we do" also describes the unending commitment our staff at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice Veterans Home provides every day when they create a home filled with love and peace for all our heroes. They are always looking for ways to improve the lives of our heroes. This past year, they worked diligently to prepare to move our heroes into their new home, never once losing site of their day-to-day needs.

"Love in all we do" also reminds me of the hundreds of partners within our veteran network. These wonderful advocates donate monies, gifts, cards, supplies and volunteer hours to improve the lives of our veterans in every corner of this great state.

Wishing you and your family a blessed holiday season and a new year of peace and happiness. And as you and your family gather this holiday season, please keep our heroes, past and present, in your hearts. God bless our veterans, their families, and our troops that are currently serving in harm's way.

Larry Zimmerman, Secretary
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE SDDVA BENEFITS TEAM



HOLIDAY MESSAGE FROM MAJOR GENERAL REISCH

Happy Holidays! This time of year is typically one of great joy when families reunite to celebrate the holidays. This holiday season, like 13 of the last 14, we will have members of the SD National Guard deployed. Detachment 48, OSA Command, the 155th Engineer Company and two individual Airmen are serving abroad in support of our federal mission. Earlier this year 250 Airmen from the 114th Fighter Wing deployed to Kunsan Air Base in the Republic of Korea for four months as part of a Theater Security Package to enable the U.S. to maintain a significant presence in the Pacific region. Since 9/11, the South Dakota National Guard has deployed more than 7,600 Soldiers and Airmen in support of overseas contingency operations.

On the home front, 25 members from the Air Guard's 114th Civil Engineer Squadron assisted with tornado recovery efforts in the community of Delmont, two separate missions were executed to provide aerial hoist and medical evacuation support for injured hikers in the Black Hills, and we provided fire suppression support with Black Hawk helicopters using water bucket drops during the Sheep Draw and Cold Brook fires. In addition one of our LUH-72 Lakota helicopters and crew deployed to the U.S. southern border to provide aerial detection and monitoring in support of U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Last but certainly not least, we continue to support the Airspace Control Alert mission at March Air Force Base in California; providing four F-16 Fighting Falcons and pilots who are ready at a moment's notice to protect the country attack.

For the second straight year, the 153rd Engineer Battalion received the MG Milton A. Reckord Trophy from the National Guard Association of the United States as the most outstanding ARNG battalion, achieving the highest standards for training and readiness.

Company C, 1-189th Aviation Regiment received the NGAUS' General John J. Pershing Trophy for weapons marksmanship. The unit attained the highest figure of merit during annual weapons qualification. Battery A, 1/147th Field Artillery Battalion earned the Certificate of Victory for having the highest overall figure of merit in the Army National Guard.

Fourteen of our Army Guard units received the National Guard Bureau's Superior Unit Award in recognition of outstanding achievement. The 211th Engineer Company took top honors in the Superior Unit Awards category and awarded the Eisenhower Trophy as the most exceptional SDARNG unit in the state.

The 114th Fighter Wing continued to demonstrate its prowess as one of the top five flying units in the nation earning the Distinguished Flying Unit Plaque. This is the fifth time the 114th has received the honor. For the fourth time in its history, the 114th also received the NGAUS Major General John J. Pesch Flight Safety Trophy, which is presented to only two flying units judged to have demonstrated the highest standards of flight safety. The 114th also received the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for the seventh time.

Anne and I would like to wish you a joyous holiday season and a very prosperous New Year. Please join us in keeping our soldiers, airmen and their families in your daily prayers.

Timothy A. Reisch
Major General, SDNG
The Adjutant General

SDNG DELIVERS WINTER CLOTHING AND TOYS TO THOSE IN NEED

Volunteer members of the South Dakota National Guard delivered more than 1,200 winter clothing items and toys statewide last week to help bring warmth and joy to people in need this winter season.

The donated clothing, including coats, mittens, hats, scarves and blankets, and toys for children were dispersed by Guard members to a variety of social service organizations in the communities in which they serve.

Soldiers and airmen, as well as members of local communities, dropped off new and gently used items from October through December at National Guard armories and Air Force installations located in 22 South Dakota communities.

This is the second time a clothing and toy drive was coordinated by members of the SDNG.

"The response we got back was phenomenal," said Lt. Col. Lynn Wilson, SDNG chaplain. "People's hearts are generous and they expressed the joy they felt when distributing the clothes and toys to places within their own community. I think this drive was very successful and as I like to say our winters are cold but our hearts are warm."

Chaplain assistant Staff Sgt. Jenna Watkins, who participated in delivering the donations to four organizations in Rapid City, felt the immediate gratification of giving to those in need.

"The positive impact this drive has had was solidified for me as I saw the people who are going to benefit from the donations," said Watkins.

"It feels good to know that we are helping our local community."



OH CHRISTMAS TREE

This time of year it's all about the presents, the decorations and the goodies. Sometimes we forget how beautiful and how simple the Christmas tree can be.

The Christmas tree has become a symbol of the spirit of Christmas in many countries and many, if not all, our homes. Something so simple and so small can add so much color and spirit into our lives.

Special thanks to all those that decorated trees to share with our veterans at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice Veterans Home.

And a very special thank you to all that hosted parties, provided gifts or just shared a moment with our veterans.

Hermosa Legion Post 303 Auxiliary decorates tree for Veterans at Michael J. Fitzmaurice Veterans Home



Bob & Terry Hodorff decorated Christmas trees and distributed them to the NCU Residents.

State American Legion and Auxiliary host holiday party for our heroes.



SOUTH DAKOTA OPENS SECOND VETERANS TREATMENT COURT

South Dakota's second Veterans Treatment Court will open officially in January of 2016 in Sioux Falls. Justices, lawyers, and leaders within the veteran network gathered in Sioux Falls this week for the official signing of the memorandum of understanding. SDDVA's Mike Maske and Jerry Lemme attended the ceremony.

Maske and Lemme will be tasked with going to the Veterans Court hearings to provide insight and assistance to the veteran and the court team in regards to what options are available to ensure that the veteran knows what benefits they may be entitled to and steer them in the right direction to get assistance.

This program will give eligible veterans alternative sentences like treatment instead of prison. Eligibility is granted to those with honorable, or administrative, discharge and without any alleged serious, felony-grade offenses. Each veteran would be assigned a mentor and have to go through an 88 week program. During that time, they would be tested for drugs and alcohol and have to make all court appearances just like anyone else going through the system. In order to graduate, the veteran must show that they are a productive member of the community.

Watertown was the first community to adopt the Veterans Court Program.

Upcoming Events

- Jan. 4—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)
- Jan. 12—SD Legislative Session Opens—Pierre—1:00 pm
- Jan. 12—Awarding of the Korean Ambassador Peace Medals—Capitol Rotunda—Pierre—2:30 pm (CT)
- Jan. 14—Veterans Legislative Breakfast—Pierre
- Jan. 27-28-State Tribal Relations Days—Pierre
- Feb. 12-14—American Legion Mid Winter Conference—Huron Crossroads
- Apr. 4—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)
- April 15-17—DAV Convention—Rapid City—Adoba
- Jun. 16-19—American Legion State Convention—Ramkota—Watertown
- Jul. 11—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)
- Oct. 3—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)

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